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Cousin Connie and the Family Circle

BY MARJORIE DILLON

BUT do you think Cousin Connie will fit in? Anybody that's globe trotted and seen everything from Cancer to Capricorn is bound to be bored or pernickity here." That was Punch Joy's gloomy prognostication when his mother announced that her favorite childhood friend had bought Cedar Crest and would reside in Valley View.

Judy, Punch's twin—they were originally Judith and James—shook her copy curls with conviction. "Sight unseen, I hereby swear she's just our sort. Why, even in her snapshots her eyes laugh, and with that dimple I'll back Cousin Connie to stand for anything the tribe perpetrates!"

"Well, she'll have to have a cast-iron constitution and be long on nerves," commented Punch skeptically. "She's always lived in hotels, not used to youngsters, and she's in for a big dose. Thirteen young joyfuls—that was one of grandpa's jokes, joyfuls rather than hopefuls—"eight in our bunch and five in uncle Dick's. All going on eight cylinders at holidays. I bet she swoons first scrap, and we'll have to administer first aid for Joy shock!"

"Well, I hope she makes gingerbread and crullers, and isn't afraid of kids tracking in a little dirt," was Jimmy's idea of a perfect relative. He spoke for the Joy boy stair-steps.

"And I wish she'd tell fairy tales and have a nice cuddly lap and let us dwee-up in her attic," piped up Janie, chairman for the younger feminine trio.

Cousin Connie arrived at the big hill house, was duly weighed and not found wanting. She was almost too good to be true, Punch decided uneasily, demonstrating in every line her worthiness to enter the charmed family circle. She was so attractive and youthful to be all of mummy's age; she entered so enthusiastically into all the family festivities, and was so eager to do her share. But the weighing was not all on the Joy side.

Though she hardly acknowledged it to herself, there was something about

her agreeable relatives that bewildered Cousin Connie. With a sinking sensation she began to fear they were self sufficient; unconsciously akin in spirit to the old man who entreated blessing only on "me and my wife, my son John and his wife; us four and no more."

"Yet they're so generous and popular and friendly," she cogitated. "It must be merely a habit." It was Judy who elucidated matters.

Once when Judy had suggested inviting her friend Florence, an only child, to the holiday frolic, Punch had protested, "Aw, the family makes racket enough, Ju! Those young-uns will raise the neighborhood roofs without any outsiders."

and then what could we do?"

Judy's sense of humor welled up. "Hire the town hall, I guess. Oh, well!" she yielded gracefully. "Then I'll get to work on the family play as usual. Don't forget, Punch, you're to train the human animals for the Santa Circus stunts." The Joys always put on an original play for Christmas, and Judy conscientiously included every child; even the cooing bald baby filled the role of live doll a-top Santa's pack.

"I think it's lovely to have such jolly congenial affairs together," congratulated Cousin Connie after the Christmas activities. "What about New Year's?"

"Oh, if the weather's decent we usually plan a skating party and bonfire at the creek!" replied Judy. "If it storms we'll swarm inside and play charades or tableaux and make taffy till bedtime."

"You don't ask in—others till after holidays then?" persisted Cousin Connie in her soft voice. Judy flashed her a puzzled glance.

"Well, we're sort of used to limiting our parties and dinners and even picnics to the tribe," she confessed slowly. "There's such a raft of us we'd have to take out a wall to get any more in. We get along pretty well for kin folks," she added complacently. "Of course we have our friends outside other times."

Cousin Connie rose abruptly. "I want your advice about a pet enterprise, Judy," she said mysteriously, leading the way thro the hall down a stairway. "This big basement room is finished, you see, and has no end of possibilities. If you'll help me—I thought with the old square piano and comfy odds and ends from the store room—"

Judy was all enthusiasm after she and Cousin Connie had spent an hour in the lower regions. She departed in a rosy glow of anticipation and the prideful air of one who shares a secret. "We can do wonders in four days," she called

back from the cedar walk.

"Don't forget to see about the left-overs," reminded Cousin Connie anxiously.

The New Year's family dinner was to be at Cedar Crest that year, but to the surprise of the elder cousins, the hostess



"JUST HOLD OUT WELCOMING HANDS
AND DRAW OTHERS INTO THE FAIRY RING—"

Drawing by Marjorie Terry Chellis

"Well, I never!" sniffed Judy, righteously indignant. Florence was the quietest mouse of a girl imaginable. But as tired Mummy Joy reminded her injured daughter, "You know how the others copy you, dear. Every child of them will be howling to invite a 'nintimate friend,'

had set the dinner hour at six, thereby setting aside the annual custom of a noon day feast.

"There's a reason," remarked Judy, sounding like an "ad," and looking decidedly merry and wholesome for a girl who had been extremely busy and exasperatingly secretive for several days.

"You might give a fellow a lone hint," grumbled Punch, who may or may not have suffered a twinge of jealousy over his twin's pre-occupation. "Want to get out the bob-sled, Ju, and take to the hill?"

Judy's eyes danced. "No, and neither do you. There's a nice job—Goody, there she is now!" She made a rush for the front door worthy of her athletic brother, returning with a bright-faced Cousin Connie.

Dad had just come in from the garage for a kettle of hot water, and grandpa was toasting his rheumatism at the open fire. The younger boys stamped in with their snow shovels after creating a remarkable snow man, and the little girls were playing house between the sofa and grandpa's huge desk.

"Happy New Year, everybody!" was Cousin Connie's blithe greeting. "I dropped into Dick's a minute and came on over to remind you that you began the year at Cedar Crest at dinner—" She was interrupted by a perfect babel. The idea! Of course they were coming, from grandpa to the dog. How did she suppose they could overlook such a red letter event? The first gathering of the clan at Cedar Crest!

"But there's to be a party afterward," continued Cousin Connie when she could be heard. Judy cradled her arms and rocked excitedly. Punch eyed her somberly. So that was what she'd been up to! "You see, we have so much room up there that Sophia and I get lost occasionally and have to rescue each other," Cousin Connie's dimple was evident, and the little girls clustered about her adoringly. "What I need is a downright house warming. If I fill the place up once it won't seem so empty again," she confided hopefully. "It takes even more than a jolly tribe of Joys to satisfy me on gala occasions. So I hereby request you to invite any body you please to our first At Home!" Her tone was light but her eyes were serious. "Judy and I have already made arrangements for some left-out folks who haven't any place to begin the New Year right."

She nodded at Judy who was bursting to break into the conversation. "I just remembered that sweet Alma Dawson from the hill ranch. She could not afford to go home for holidays, and she was crying her eyes out when I called on her in that cold back room at Gale's. Then there's Miss Elston, the new High School teacher from New Jersey," her words tripped each other up in her eagerness. "She's boarding and so homesick that when I asked her she acted as if I'd handed her a deed to a gold mine!"

Everybody began talking at once. Grandpa's bass voice boomed out triumphantly. "I'm going to round up Seth Carnes, that Civil War vet that's tied to a wheel chair," he declared, his old face alight. "We never do get a chance to yarn."

"You may spin war yarns as long and fast as you like, only I want to be in at the spinning," was Cousin Connie's one condition. "I'll send for your friend myself."

Dad Joy started immediately so he could ask his foreman, a homeless ex-service man, and his elderly lonesome stenographer. Mummy was half way to the phone to get quiet little Miss Warner who had done everything in a pinch for her, from nursing the children to making things over.

"I'll kidnap the Barnes boys," Punch was getting into his mackinaw. "They're like lost goslings since their mother died. Oh, and how would it be to ask Mr. Hudson to drop in?" His eyes twinkled at Judy who twinkled back.

"It won't interfere with his pleasure if he stops for Miss Elston on his way out," she laughed gaily. Mr. Hudson also was an imported teacher. So promising to inveigle his guests into gathering evergreens and helping decorate the new basement social room, Punch departed, whistling merrily.

"Our party grows like Jack's beanstalk," said delightful Cousin Connie, patting Janie's flaxen head. "What about the little folks' guests? You've been seen, now you may be heard!"

Janie and Ruth had decided on the new neighbors over the way, unfortunate children, who, if you'd believe it, didn't hang up their stockings because Santa didn't have their address and probably wouldn't have stopped anyway. Immediately Cousin Connie had an inspiration for secrets with the children, involving a delightful new variety of New Year's tree which might spring up almost like a magic mushroom if everybody helped.

"Me'n Dan's gonna nab Jiggers first," Jimmy remarked, starting an avalanche in the wrap closet in corralling a mere cap. "Then we want Antonio." Judy gasped and opened her mouth, then, meeting Cousin Connie's eyes, subsided. "Samples from high and low life," she reflected drolly, recalling that Jiggers existed like a bat in somebody's attic; while Antonio had more comfortable quarters in the school basement.

"It looks as if the Joys were not only to be unconfined, but unlimited!" jested Mummy, regarding Cousin Connie thoughtfully. "I believe you've started something, Connie. I don't see why we can't persuade dad to finish up a reception hall of some sort in our attic. Your hospitality is catching, Connie."

Cousin Connie's eyes were luminous. "You see, Ellen, I've lived such a vagabond life from clime to clime that now I have a place for friends I may seem to overdo it, like a small boy turned loose

in a candy shop." Judy edged closer and slipped a small hand into the beautiful white one. "You folks are blessed with a beautiful family circle," Cousin Connie pursued wistfully, "but a circle is the easiest thing in the world to enlarge. Not a bit awkward like adding to a parallelogram or a rhomboid. Just hold out welcoming hands and draw others into the fairy ring, then go skipping on like children going 'round the mulberry bush."

She rose and invited Judy to accompany her. "Well, until there are other places sizable enough, consider my home open house for friends and frolics regardless," she smiled winningly.

"It's the loveliest way to begin the New Year," caroled Judy, "and we'll be taking advantage of it, you'll see! I have a class party in mind this second. Oh, Cousin Connie, please repeat that verse you said to me yesterday. I want Mummy to hear it."

Softly Cousin Connie quoted:

"A Flower unblown, a Book unread,
A tree with fruit unharvested;
A wondrous Fountain yet unsealed,
A Casket with its gift concealed;
This is the year that for you waits
Beyond Tomorrow's mystic gate."

A Story of Jacob Riis

JACOB RIIS, writing of his boyhood experiences in Denmark, told of going to the city of Copenhagen to meet his student brother who was in the art exhibition in the palace of Charlottenburg. He found two stairways running up from the main entrance and was debating which to take when a handsome gentleman in a blue overcoat asked if he could help him. Jacob told his trouble and they went up together. They walked slowly and Jacob carried on an animated conversation with him. Jacob told him about his school and his father the schoolmaster. He told the stranger that he liked the people of Copenhagen because they were so kind and friendly to everybody. At this the stranger patted his arm. When they arrived at the door, the servant in red bowed very low. Jacob returned the bow and said to the stranger, "You see how friendly these folks are. I have never seen this man before."

At this the stranger laughed outright and said good-bye. Jacob soon found his brother and told him about the nice man who had directed him. They were resting in one of the big rooms and Jacob said, "There he is!"

To Jacob's surprise he saw his brother arise and give a very low bow.

When the stranger had passed, Jacob's brother exclaimed, "Good gracious! You don't mean to say he was your guide. Why, boy, that was the king!"

Mr. Riis said in telling the story, "I was never so astonished in my life and expect never to be again."

—The Target.



Drawing by F. Lilley Young

The Newcomer

BY BLANCHE ELIZABETH WADE

THE New Year stands at Old Year's gate,
And knocks with tiny hand,
And begs to take the hour-glass now,
To tilt its run-out sand.

The Old Year opens wide the gate,
To let the New Year in.
He greets the sturdy, little chap
Who lifts a dimpled chin.

The Old Year shows him how to grasp
The great scythe on the hook,
And underneath the tiny arm,
He tucks a huge, new book.

Then off the Old Year vanishes,
So tired and worn with age,
And now a chubby finger points
To top of clean, fresh page!

Finding the Path

BY RUBY HOLMES MARTYN

"HURRAH!" cried Danny when he jumped out of bed and ran to the window to see if it had stopped snowing. "Here is the sun getting up and such a nice lot of snow that it'll be fun shoeing to the edge of the woods where I feed the birds. And they must be hungry as anything after the storm so I better hurry to get dressed and start. I'm going to keep account of the different kinds of birds that I see come for food because the teacher says she'll give us special credit marks at school for telling what we know about the birds we feed."

So after breakfast Danny packed a little basket with chopped suet and dry oatmeal and a paper bag of wheat and some table scraps that mother had saved for him.

"I wish Bindo could come with me," said Danny when his basket was ready. Bindo had just commenced to come to the school where Danny went every day and part of the way they could walk together. The one who reached the finger post at the fork of the road first, each morning, waited for the other, and each afternoon they came as far as that together. But

they hadn't been back and forth to play because it was a long way around the road between their homes.

"Bindo doesn't know a thing about the birds around here," continued Danny as his mother tied a warm muffler at the back. "I tried to tell him yesterday how they lived in the woods all winter and what their names were but he couldn't remember very well. Lots of American words he gets so funny and wrong."

"I guess we'll have to find the magic path to Bindo's for you," laughed father who was mixing a bucket of warm mash for the hens. "Would you like him for a playmate most every day?"

"Is there truly a magic path to his house?"

"We'll see!" promised father. "We'll see after you've fed the birds. I'm going to sled up to the big woods this afternoon and if we get hold of Bindo you can show him the birds up there."

It was quite a ways from the farm house to the edge of the woods where Bindo fed the birds.

"I'm going to go in just as straight a line as I can," he thought, as he trudged along on his snow shoes with the heavy basket in his hand. He knew that having fed the birds there steadily during the winter would enable him to see sev-

eral unusual kinds to tell the teacher about when he went to school Monday morning. He thought he ought to see more kinds than any other boy in the school.

But when Danny reached the edge of the woods and called, only a few birds came fluttering down from the pine tree tops.

"Somebody has frightened them!" thought Danny wistfully. "No, they don't act frightened, either! They act as if they just weren't here!"

Danny's throat felt so chokey that he couldn't call again, and from just there in the woods he heard a clear whistle like the one he had always used to call the birds when he came with food. Who could be mocking him?

"I'll go and see!" thought Danny stoutly. "I can't get lost in the woods with my shoe trail showing the way to come back again."

So Danny shuffled along on the snow under the big pine trees and he hadn't gone far when he caught sight of something red among the trunks. It looked just the color of Bindo's sweater! Danny hurried. Surely enough there was Bindo sitting on a fence rail that was way at the other side of the woods, and he whistled softly to call the birds he was feeding from a round basket.

"They came when I whistle jus' like you tella me yesterday!" he cried when he saw Danny.

"How'd you get so far from home?" asked Danny.

Bindo pointed to a little house beyond the field at that edge of the woods.

"It is not so far where I live!" he said.

"Then I've found the magic path that father knew about!" laughed Danny. "He knew there was a cross cut to the house where you live and that I'm such a big boy now I can make a path through this strip of woods."

"Ah, I lika America where you teacher me to call da birds and finda path of magic to my house! I shall learn like that ver' soon!"

"Now I'm going to sit up there by the side of you, Bindo, and we'll choose birds, you one and then I one, to tell the teacher about next Monday," added Danny happily. Finding the magic path to share with his playmate was lots more fun than keeping the birds to his own self.

Ladies First

Little Tommy and his younger sister were going to bed together without a light. They had just reached the bottom of the stairs when Tommy, looking into the darkness, and feeling a little nervous, turned around and asked.

"Ma, is it polite for a gentleman to go before a lady when they have to walk in single file?"

"No, my son," replied the mother. "The lady should always take the lead."

"I thought so," said Tommy delightedly. "Go ahead, Susie."



THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

61 BEDFORD ROAD,
SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

My dear Miss Buck:—Having heard and read so much about the Beacon Club, I have become greatly interested in it and would like very much to be a member. I have gone to the Unitarian church school from the first grade up and am now in the highest class. We are studying "Unwrought Iron," comparing the smelting and molding of the iron to the shaping of our own lives. It is most interesting and I try not to miss a Sunday.

Sincerely,
SYLVIA GUTMANN.

110 WOODMONT AVENUE,
CHERRYVALE, VA.

My dear Miss Buck:—I have just begun to go to the Unitarian Sunday School in Washington. I have gotten *The Beacon* three times and like it very much. May I please become a member of the Beacon Club? I have just moved from Washington out to Cherryvale, and am rather lonely, for I don't know anyone here yet. I should be

glad to correspond with someone who is lonely too. I am almost fourteen years old and am in second year, High School, but I am staying out of school until February or so.

Sincerely,
YVONNE RAPEER.

247 CONGRESS STREET,
PORTLAND, MAINE.

Dear Miss Buck: I go to the Unitarian church and Sunday school and I like it very much. My teacher's name is Miss Thorndike; she is a very nice Sunday-school teacher. We learn a lot about the Bible. We have a good minister at our church; his name is Mr. Metcalf. I get *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much. I would like to be a member of the Beacon Club.

Lovingly yours,
KATHLEEN DRISKO.

Other new members of our Club are,—Robert and William Borth, Henry and Robin Hood, Ted Kennedy and Louis Kent, all of the Unitarian Sunday school of Lawrence, Kas.; Madeline B. Spencer, Portland, Me. (First Church); John Berry Sumner, Omaha, Neb.; Davis Arnold, Peterboro, N. H.; Arlene Hall, Walpole, N. H.; Harriet Willard, Bala, Pa.; Cleyburn Carter, Timmons ville, S. C.

Church School News

THE church school of All Souls Church, Washington, D. C., opened on September 24th with an attendance of 148. At the same session last year, 110 were present. The Rally Day service in October brought 180 to the school and the monthly faculty meeting had 22 in attendance. A Kindergarten and a Primary class meet regularly during the hour of the church service. There has now been added a session of a Junior class under a paid teacher while church is in session. This school has already raised for this year its pledge of \$100 toward the building fund of the church. Mr. T. M. Roberts is the Superintendent.

The school of religion of our church in Baltimore, Md., has secured the services of Miss Marguerite Emilio as Director of Religious Education. The November calendar bears the report that the school has been in session four Sundays and during that time the enrolment has increased from 32 to 52. The organization of the school includes a two-hour session for pupils of the Junior grade, the second period coming during the time of the church service. Eleven names of pupils are printed in the calendar for perfect attendance during October. Twenty-five new Bibles have been presented to the school by a member of the congregation.

One of our interesting reports comes from Unity Home, New Bedford, which is the name of a mission church and its church school. The average attendance at this school last year was 140. The record of its many activities covers several pages and shows a very important work being accomplished. This school has a library of over three hundred vol-

umes of the best and latest books. Pupils and teachers come largely from the mill population of New Bedford. Members of this school are in the Church Basketball League and Church Baseball League of New Bedford, of which the minister of this church, Rev. Samuel L. Elberfeld, is president.

The Westminster Unitarian Church School of Providence, R. I., opened October 1st with a fine attendance and an enthusiastic group of children. Best of all, there was a full quota of teachers and available substitutes for the classes. There are four new teachers this year in this school and three new classes. Every Sunday there are new pupils in the school, which gives promise of a large growth. The increase is in part due to the excellent advertising which the school has been carrying in the local paper.

A circular has been issued announcing the church school of the Church of the Saviour, Brooklyn, N. Y. It carries the list of classes by grades and the textbooks used in each. It states the aim of the school, tells that it is maintained from the church treasury, and is organized on a self-governing basis as training for democracy. Miss Leone McLean is the Director of Religious Education in this school and the minister, Rev. J. H. Lathrop, is the Superintendent of Worship. The Kindergarten, in charge of a trained worker, meets during the hour of church service.

The Dublin, N. H., Union Sunday-school is composed of pupils from the Congregational and Unitarian churches with some children from other denominations. We are hoping to see this school increase its numbers and become a fine community force in Dublin.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XXV

I am composed of 11 letters.
My 4, 6, 7, is wet dirt.
My 2, 3, 10, 11, is an important respiratory organ.
My 1, 9, 11, is a filthy little animal.
My 8, 9, 11, is what one does with a spade.
My 5, 9, 10, is a tiny but extremely useful article.
My whole is always spoken of at Christmas time.

SYLVIA GUTMANN.

ENIGMA XXVI

I am composed of 20 letters.
My 15, 10, 2, 7, 16, 6, is a flower.
My 18, 10, 7, 15, 4, 1, is a metal.
My 20, 9, 6, is eatable.
My 3, 8, 11, 13, 19, 17, is a city.
My 5, 14, 12, 6, is to be quiet.
My whole is the name of a favorite author.

JANET I.

A BIBLE QUOTATION IN ANAGRAM

"Nhoru hyt efhtra nda hty broemt; htta tyh ayds yma eb olgn noup het nald hhwci teh oLdr tyh oGd eihvgt ehte."

DOUBLE ACROSTIC

X	.	.	.	X
X	.	.	.	X
X	.	.	.	X
X	.	.	.	X
X	.	.	.	X
X	.	.	.	X
X	.	.	.	X

Reading downward, first on the left side and then on the right, this acrostic spells the name of an institution of education.

1. Planets. 2. A boy's name. 3. One of the points of the compass. 4. Likewise. 5. Scene of a battle in Texas. 6. An Alpine song.

THE PORTAL.

CHARADE

A kind of food, my first you see;
My second laughs at you in glee;
My whole may hang upon a tree.

Youth's Companion.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 12.

ENIGMA XXII.—In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

RIDDLE.—Head.

WORD SQUARE.—CLAN
LANE
ANNA
NEAR

FOUND IN PUMPKIN.—1. Mink. 2. Pup. 3. Pink. 4. Pin. 5. Kin. 6. Nip. 7. Pun. 8. Pip.

Jimmie—Father what is an excavation?
Father—An excavation is a place from which dirt has been taken.

Jimmie—Is baby's face one, father?

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REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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